

Gettin' Ziggy With It

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Summary: Jasper Jade, the Viletown counterpart of Mitch Mitchelson, is forced to take home Plutonium's experimental guinea pig.

Gettin' Ziggy With It

I've finally decided to write this story. I've had to reregister, so you can find my other stories under these usernames:

Gen-Xer2, Gen-Xer, Generation-Xer, GenXer2.

Gettin' Ziggy With It

The City of Viletown—a new day dawns at Oaky Pokes, the school for young children run to by Oppressor Plutonium, and the Mayor/Dictator. And with it a new lesson in conformity, and rigid, unquestioning obedience!—

And on this particular day, Penny Less, arch enemy of the Powerpunks Girls was not in attendance. Miss Leetch instructed her students of the glorious plans for conquest of the Oppressor, and how his domination of Viletown benefited them all, and how his weapons of mass-annihilation kept everyone secure—and, of course, how everyone owed the Oppressor everything. For the writing lesson, she had the kids write down the ten reasons why Jomo Momo was wrong for trying to stop the Oppressor from conquering other cities and taking over the national government. The children basically parroted back what they had supposedly "learned," without too much thought.

"Very good, class," she said.

The bell rang, and kids leapt from their seats, streaking for the door.

"Wait, children!" commanded Miss Leetch. "Not so fast! I have just

one more lesson--a very special assignment for one lucky pupil!"

The stopped, staring at her blankly. Miss Leetch now had a cruel smile on her scarred visage, and the children all knew what that meant: none of them cared very much to be this "lucky" student.

"It's Friday," she said, as her eyes roved gloatingly over the frightened youngsters. "And someone needs to take care of Ziggy this weekend."

Ziggy was the small, underfed, orange-and-white experimental guinea pig that Oppressor Plutonium loaned regularly to Oaky Pokes kindergarten.

Zachary "Whisk" Mueller rasied his hand, "But doesn't Plutonium take him back on the weekends?"

"Not this time, Zach," Miss Leetch told him. "And you will refer to him as the Oppressor. Is that understood, young man?"

"Y-yes, ma'am," Zach stammered.

"This time I'm giving you a test. Which one of you will volunteer to take Ziggy home and run the Oppressor's experiments on him? He had given a list right here of all the experiments he wants run on Ziggy. So who wants to show the most loyalty to the Oppressor? Who will take little Ziggy home?"

A couple of the most mean-spirited kids eagerly rasied their hands, with the rest looked unsure of how to react. But Miss Leetch riveted her gaze on the one student who looked most fearful of all.

This was, of course, Jasper Jade, best friend of Penny Less, and therefore automatically an enemy of Plutonium and the Powerpunk Girls. Jasper, the richest kid in Viletown, was dressed in his usual lush purple silk suit, with an emerald bow-tie and sash. His brown hair was immaculately combed to one side of his freckled face.

Jasper was at the moment trying with most difficulty not to meet the teacher's eyes, dreading that he might be the one chosen for such a horrible task. Ziggy had had all sorts of unethical experiments conducted on him already, such as tests for new-fangled poisons and chemical warfare, which the evil genius had whipped up in his lab. The very thought of inflicting torture on an innocent creature turned Jasper ill; often he had fantasized about taking Ziggy and running off with him. But he knew better than to attempt such a thing. Anyone who stole Plutonium's property ended up dead or just vanishing mysteriously.

"Why, Jasper Jade!" came the sneering voice of Miss Leetch, sending a pang of fresh horror to stab Jasper's heart. "How very wonderful for you to volunteer!"

"But I didn't!" cried Jasper in horror, his high-pitched British accent gone wavery with fright. Then he saw to his horror that Miss Leetch hadn't picked him by accident. She knew he hadn't volunteered; she'd had him in mind all along.

"Why, I wouldn't have thought you had it in you," Miss Leetch, "Aren't you the one who's always feeding Ziggy in class, petting him, and being all nice to him? And all this time, you just itchng to cut him open!"

"C-cut him _open?" _the boy choked.

"Why yes, Jasper dear. That's exactly what you're going to do!" she said nastily at Jasper's face, as she shoved a small metal box containing Plutonium's experimental gagets into Jasper's unwilling ahnds. "You're going to dissect Ziggy without an aestivalic! Then you're going to wire electrodes to him, and see how his system reacts to high-voltage! And thenâ€"

Jasper burst suddenly into tears. "No! Please! Don't make me do this, Miss Leetch! I can't hurt Ziggy!"

"Oh, no?" Miss Leetch sneered. "Think you can defy me, young man? We'll see about _this! What do you you think Girls?"

In a flash the three Powerpunk Girls, Berserk, Brat and Brute landed in front of her.

"Jasper is refusing to carry out his homework assignment," she told them.

"Oh, is that right?" Berserk sneered.

Brute pounded her fist. "Oh, you'll do it, you little good-goody rich snot! You'll do it, or we'll pound you to a pulp!"

"But Iâ€" cried Jasper though his tears.

"_Here!"_ shrieked Brat as she shoved Ziggy's container into the mortified boy's arms. "you're gonna take him home and do all the experiments on the listâ€"or else!"

"Are you sure you want _Jasper_ to do this?" complained Brute to Miss Leetch. "He's the last one you'd want! He's nothing but little rich snobby wuss! He'll _never_ do it!"

"Ahhh, but that's just the point!" explained Miss Leetch. "Jasper is to prove his worth and loyalty to Oppressor Plutonium! Remember all the wealth he owns! That's most of the money in Viletown, and the Oppressor wants to make sure it goes for good causes! Like for his weapons of world-domination, for example!"

" Ahhhâ€|.good point!" growled Brute "But I still don't trust that little wuss! He gives his money to homeless shelters, and things like that!"

"I say we keep an eye on our friend Jasper!" suggested Berserk.

"Good idea!" said Brat and Brute.

The kids had now exited the school. Jasper, knowing the surveillance cameras would be tracking his every move, had little choice but to comply. His great, purple limo was parked outside the school as

usual. His butler got out and opened the door for him. Jasper slid in, holding Ziggy in his container. The butler got in, and they were off.

"Well, Master Jasper," the Butler said conversationally. "I see you seem to have acquired a new pet,"

"Ahâ€|that's correct, Flaunteroy," stammered Jasper. "But it's just for the weekend,"

"Well, that's a relief," Flaunteroy answered stoutly. "You know your grand mum has a thing regarding rodents."

High above, and slightly back as to remain out of view, soared the Powerpunk Girls.

"Man, I really hate that Jasper Jade," Brute was saying to her sisters. "So snotty and stuck up! Know what? I don't think he even could hurt Ziggy if he wanted to! And know what else? I hope he doesn't! I'm just itching for an excuse to pound him!"

"Just hold off for now!" answered Berserk. "Let's see what he does , first!"

The kept observing the limo from above as it sped toward Viletown's most prosperous sector. At last, it turned into a large, gated community marked Shady Acres. The purple limo passed many expensive homes, until it reached a large plot of landscape fenced off by a high gate wrought of pure gold in the shape of two enormous dollar-signs. The gates swung apart, allowing Jasper's limo to enter. The mansion, set high on a hill, isolated even from the rest of the Viletown wealthy, was the largest of them all. The estate was so huge and opulent, that Jasper often felt isolated himself. His grandmum, though she cared for him, seemed to always be busy with business and foreign affairs to pay her grandson much heed. Jasper's mum and dad lived in the UK. Having little time to look after him themselves, had left him here.

The limo pulled up in front of the Jade estate. Jasper politely waited for Flaunteroy to open the door. Then he wasted no time in dashing up the steps and into the mansion, Ziggy in tow. He straked down the great red-carpeted hall. From one of the drawing rooms, he could hear his grandmum deep in some conversation with one of the servants.

"Just you tell the Ambassador," Granny Jade was saying, " That I and my grandson will be delighted to come and dine with him, so long as lobster and fresh caviar are on the menuâ€|"

Jasper loved lobster and fresh caviar, but he had far ore important things to worry him now! He dashed up the long, curving staircase, then down the hall to his bedroom. He rushed in and slammed the door tight.

The room contained all of Jasper's most treasured personal belongings: his rows and rows of classic books bound in leather with gold stamping, and his huge collection of dramas and musical DVDs made by the BBC. Jasper loved most all of the, except he couldn't watch some of Shakespeare because of the amount of blood on the stage.

The boy set Twiggy's container on the floor. He reached in and picked him up, holding him eye to eye. The little guinea pig squeaked faintly. He looked at Jasper with sad eyes.

"Oh, Ziggy!" cried Jasper. "You know I won't hurt you! I can't, no matter what they do to me! But listen! I've always wanted to take you away! And now's my chance. I'll keep you safe Ziggy. But if the Powerpunks find us, lay on your backâ€"pretend you're suffering! Then maybe they'll leave us alone!"

Meanwhile, outside the Jade estate, Brute ripped loose one of the huge dollar-sign gates., and tossed t contemptuously aside.

"Hey, Brute!" cried Brat. "Why'd ya do that?! We can fly over, duh! Remember?"

"Yeah, well I just felt like it!"

That caused all three of the PPkG to snicker vilely.

They flew over the damaged gate into the mansion. Wanting to remain as quiet as possible (for the moment), they floated up the long staircase, and down the hall to Jasper's room.

"Wonder what little snot-face is up to?" Berserk whispered to her sisters.

"Not much if ya ask me!" Brute whispered. "Hear any squeals of terror?"

"Ah, no," said Brat.

"My point exactly."

"Well," hissed Berserk, "let's take a peek in, just to be sure."

Berserk peered through the door's keyhole with her enormous pink-orange eye, as her sisters crowded on each side.

Jasper was some distance from them, near the huge bed. He was kneeling in front of the box, his back turned to them, talking to Ziggy, but they couldn't make out what he was saying.

"Hmmmm," said Berserk. "Something's not right. I think we'd better check this out."

"Ah!" exclaimed Brute in a hoarse whisper. "I second that!"

The PPkG crashed through the door. Jasper sprang to his feet in fright.

"How's the homework coming?" Berserk asked in a nasty voice.

"Ah...uh...uh...well...," stammered the kid in a confused voice.

"Oh, so you've already dissected sweet little Ziggy have you?" Brat demanded.

"Well, not quite!" Jasper suddenly he was able to burst out a lame excuse. "I had just opened the box, but the poor fellow-he just fainted! I guess I can't work on him. he has to be alive and awake, right?"

"Oh yeah?" Berserk asked. "Then let's see!" She shoved Jasper aside, and the three PPPkG floated to the container and looked in. Little Ziggy was lying on his back, his mouth slightly open. Berserk reached and felt the guinea pig's chest. Ziggy still had a pulse. But the animal indeed seemed to have passed out in fright. "Hmm" she wondered. Could Jasper, wimpy little Jasper, be telling the truth?

"Hey!" exclaimed brute suddenly. "Check this out! The box isn't even open!"

All three punks swerved about to see that it was indeed so. The metal box containing the hideous experimental gadgets had its lid still tightly shut. Jasper had certainly not made any effort on his assignment.

Brat flicked the switch, and the lid sprang open. She removed the electrodes and held them before Jasper's frightened gaze. "Let's see you get busy with these!" she told him. "Or maybe I will! Hehehehe!"

"N-no!" Jasper choked. "I-I'd rather you wouldn't"

"What's wrong?" sneered the blue powerpunk, "Do you need a demonstration?" she picked up a scalpel.

"Yeah, maybe ya need us to show you the ropes!" cried Berserk. "Brat's actually quite good at this sort of thing! That's why we're here, Jasper! to be your personal tutors!"

Jasper could stand no more. "NOOOOOO!" the boy screamed at them. "I WON'T hurt Ziggy! I'll NEVER hurt him and you can't make me!"

His outburst was so sudden and unanticipated that the three punks flew back in unison, and floated in the air regarding him in shock, the three pairs of huge eyes unblinking.

Jasper snatched up the guinea pig, who had now come awake, and glared at the punks in open defiance. "You can't have him either!"

After the initial shock of Jasper's defiance had worn off, horrid, crafty smiles formed on the Powerpunk's faces.

"Welllll," chortled Berserk, "So you don't want to do the Oppressor's experiments, eh? Then maybe you need a little persuasion."

Brute floated toward a huge shelf of leatherbound books, part of Jasper's collection. "What if we were to set this precious collection of yours on fire!"

"No!" cried Jasper in sudden horror. "You can't"

Brute laughed cruelly. "Really? Hah! Just watch!" She turned her lasers on the books; crimson beams shot from her eyes, and the

leather bindings burst into flame.

Jasper let out a scream of horror.

"And how about these DVDs of yours. Hah! looks like they must cost a fortune! Too bad about this!" Vindictively, she laser-blasted Jasper's shelf of costly DVDs of fine arts productions. She then began smashing them to pieces with her fists. Shards of clear plastic and shattered DVDs began to explode over the room.

"No! Stop!" cried Jasper, tears bursting from his eyes.

"THEN CUT THAT FOUL LITTLE BEAST OPEN!" commanded Berserk. "DO IT NOW, FOR THE GLORY OF THE OPPRESSOR!"

"I WON'T!" Jasper screamed at her.

He snatched up Ziggy, and dashed out of the room and down the hall.

"Stop it, you guys!" Berserk commanded to her sisters, who were still gleefully smashing up Jasper's collections. "The little rats are escaping!"

"And I was really having fun!" snorted Brute.

"GET HIM!" Berserk screeched, as all three of the PPkG took off in streaks of scarlet.

Jasper, holding tight to Ziggy, raced down the hall to the elevator. He pressed the button and the doors sprang open. He jumped in and as he glanced back, he saw the three punks zooming in his direction before the doors shut. Jasper quickly pushed the "up" button. Fortunately for Jasper and Ziggy, it was an extremely modernized electronic elevator that did not use cables, and it whooshed up in less than a second, zooming for the roof of the Jade estate. Even so, Jasper dreaded at any moment hearing the crash of the powerpunks tearing into the shaft and ripping open the doors.

Below, Berserk, Brat and Brute floated outside the doors.

"Drat!" spat Brute. "Where'd he go!"

"I'mbettin' the roof!" shouted Berserk. "C'mon!"

The punks smashed through the ceiling.

Meanwhile Jasper had reached the roof ahead of them. The doors opened and the boy sprang out, racing for his own private helicopter. "Jelks!" Jasper cried to the pilot.

Mr. Jelks, the helicopter pilot, was waiting there at the station, having just returned from lunch break. "Eh?" he said, startled awake. "What's that, Master Jasper?"

"Man the helicopter, quick!" Jasper cried. "We have to go-now!"

Jelks was obviously confused by the sight of the boy uncharacteristically clutching a frightened guinea pig; obviously

Jasper seriously distressed. "Well, if you say so young sir—"

The powerpunks, evil smirks on their huge-eyed faces, burst through the roof.

Ziggy squealed right at the sight of them.

"MY WORD!" cried Jelks "It's those dratted powerpunks!"

"Running out on us, Jasper? Berserk sneered.

—"RUN! NOW!" screamed Jasper.

Jelks waited for no further explanations as to what might be transpiring. He leapt into the cab, pulling Jasper and Ziggy in after him. Jasper slammed shut the door.

Jelks pulled the lever, and the copter took off. "Make for Jomo's volcano!" Jasper ordered.

The punks held back, floating in the air, and snickering. They waited until the copter was a good distance ahead before streaking in its direction.

—"Faster, Jelks, faster!" Jasper cried.

"Young sir, we're going as fast as we can!"

They gasped as Brat streaked around to glare at them through the cab from above. She struck a mighty punch, causing the glass surface to erupt in spiderweb of cracks. Jasper felt cold despair well in his heart. "No!" he cried.

Brute seized hold of one of the propeller blades, making the copter halt in the air. She wrenched the blade out of shape, then took an enormous bite out of it.

Berserk fired her deathrays on the rear of the copter. The metal buckled and melted beneath the fantastic heat, exposing the engine, which burst into flame. Brute released the blade, and the copter funneled and looped erratically, careening in the direction of the cityscape below.

All three punks cried out in evil triumph.

The copter continued to zigzag toward the earth. It narrowly missed crashing into a ruined building. Jelks maneuvered the levers as best he could to land it as safely as possible for himself and his passengers. Still, the copter whirled crazily as citizens fled screaming. The copter crashed to the concrete, skidding to a halt. Jelks was sent crashing headlong into the control panel, knocking him out.

Thinking swiftly, Jasper punched out 911 on his cell phone and yelled out the street address number. Then he leapt from the car holding Ziggy, and ran as fast as he could.

Seconds later, the punks landed on the pavement.

"The cabbie's out!" observed Brute. "But where'd little snot-nose get

to?"

_ "There he is!"_ Brat shrieked, as she spied Jasper.

_ "Let's get him!"_ screamed Berserk.

Off they streaked after Jasper in three trails of light. Already sirens were beginning to sound in the distance.

Running on the sidewalk, Jasper turned down a narrow street, then down another, attempting to throw the punks off. The PPKG however, could have caught up with a running boy easily; they took their time with sadistic patience, staying on Jasper's trail until the right moment.

Then Jasper made the error of running down a blind alley ending in a brick wall. The punks zoomed after him.

Trapped at last, Jasper and Ziggy turned gasping with horror as the punks zoomed up before them, casting their twisted shadows over the wall. Someone had sprayed "Plutonium Rulz" in fluorescent red graphiti-paint over the bricks.

"Wellll, Jasper," announced Berserk. "Finally, you're going to get what's coming to you!"

"Yeah!" shouted Brute, pounding her fist in anticipation, "You're gonna really get it this time, Jade! I've been fixn' to do this for a long time!"

"And then," added Brat, "we're takin' Ziggy back to our daddy! You've already fluked the assignment, Jade! But don't worry! Our daddy will do it for you!"

Ziggy gulped in horror.

_ "No!"_ cried Jasper. Getting on his knees, the boy wrenched off the cover of a manhole. Beneath there was a deep shaft descending into the Viletown sewer system. A metal ladder stretched down into the depths, lost from sight in the murk.

The powerpunks, thinking that Jasper was attempting to escape, held back, knowing they could easily catch him. But instead of descending the rungs, the boy lifted Ziggy, and said to him, "Go!"

The little guinea pig looked at Jasper, and realized at once what the boy meant for him to do; he jumped onto the ladder's left railing, and slid down.

Brute, she and her sisters seeing what Jasper had done, fumed, "_ Ooooooh, you've done it now, Jasper Jade!"_

_ "Yeah!" _ screamed Brat. "Do you know what happens to anyone who loses or damages our daddy's property?!"

_ "WE'LL SHOW YOU!"_ all three shrieked in unison. They streaked in the direction of the horrified Jasper, intending to fry the boy with their laser eyes, then pound and pulverize him to a pulp. Jasper could not even cry out, as he numbly awaited his fate.

A great tremor shuddered through the concrete.

"Wait!" cried Berserk. "hold it!" She swung out her arm, as she and her sisters halted in midair, inches from their intended victim.

"What the-?!" Brute started.

The pavement cracked into a jagged spiderweb. A vast rumbling issued up from below. And then...

There was a tremendous explosion under the street. Bricks and dislodged sections of concrete were sent flying. All three of the Girls were sent reeling back.

Berserk and her sisters shielded their huge eyes from the whirling, stinging debris, as they stood coughing in the billowing clouds of dust.

A great roar shook the ruined buildings of Viletown to their foundations. The powerpunks eyes widened as the dust cleared.

"Whoa!" Brute exclaimed.

Before them, towering over the ruin and rubble of the street, reared the deformed shape of a gigantic mutant rodent. Even in this twisted form, the Powerpunk Girls recognized Ziggy, their creator's guinea pig. He retained his white-splotched-with orange coloration. But his eyes were now the size of saucer-plates, orange and bloodshot. His teeth had sprouted into gargantuan, rodentine tusks, now dripping with green-glowing radioactive saliva. The mutated Ziggy towered over the wide-eyed punks, glowering at them in rage: here were the three girls who had tried to kill the one child who had shown him kindness, Jasper Jade. For all of his existence, Ziggy had suffered at the hands of the Oppressor and his three twisted offspring.

The giant rodent gave vent to a roar like a hurricane, blasting back the fragile forms of the three punks.

The Girls screamed in unison. In one massive swipe, Ziggy snatched them in a huge claw. He lifted the three shrieking punks, as his vast maw, dripping with radioactive slime, yawned wide. _

_ "He's gonna eat us!" _ shrieked Brat.

"Yeh?" roared Brute. "We'll just _see_ about _that!_" _Brute focused her lasers on the face of the monster. Ziggy roared in agony and released his hold on Brute and her sisters.

_ "Hah!" _ roared Brute. "_Let's show 'im Girls! Let's teach him if he tries to eat us, we'll stick in his throat!" _

In vivid trails green, blue, and orange-pink, the Powerpunk Girls streaked around their monstrous adversary, aiming to outmaneuver and confuse him.

Ziggy, roaring, slashed the air repeatedly with his claws, but, having recovered from their initial fright, the punks easily evaded him.

"Hah! Catch us if you can!" taunted Brute.

Berserk lunged forward, smashing her fist into the mouth of the mutant, snapping off one of his deformed tusks. Ziggy howled in rage.

Brute socked him from the other side, jarring another of the fangs loose.

Below, from the street, Jasper observed the battle in a daze. The monster was Ziggy, he realized, and he was doing his best to keep the punks from harming him.

"Can't get us!" sneered Brat, who had stopped in midair to taunt the creature. But that was just what Ziggy needed. Roaring in rage, the mutant guinea pig lunged forward trapping Brat within his monstrous fanged jaws.

"BRAT!" cried Berserk and Brute, at the sight of their sister's peril.

Ziggy's throat contorted as the prisoner fought to get out.

Berserk blasted Ziggy with her deathrays again, causing the beast to roar in pain. In a flash of green, Brute was within the monster's jaws, prying them open with her super-strength. As the mutant's jaws creaked apart, Brute found herself being coated with the dripping, toxic-glowing slime. But she kept straining, prying the jaws open, until her sister was able to shoot out, cracking off another of the monster's tusks as she did so.

Again the beast raged in fury.

The punks sped a short distance away, where they floated briefly in the air, considering what their next move should be.

"Yeech!" exclaimed Brat. She was now coated with the hideous slime of the thing's throat.

"We gotta kill this thing!" exclaimed Brute.

"But don't you see?" asked Berserk. "It's not just mad at us! It's trying to protect Jasper!"

Ziggy roared at them again, towering in the street between them and Jasper Jade, who was still backed against the ruins of the brick wall.

"Then we got all the more reason to take this guy out!" snickered Brute with relish. "No overgrown mutant rat's gonna keep me from killin' that 'lil rich snot! Let's go!"

The punks streaked at Ziggy, once more confusing him by circling him in blinding colored streaks. Then, at the right moment, Berserk socked Ziggy hard in one eye. Brute kicked him in the teeth with ubr force, shattering another tusk. Brat blasted him with her deadly rays.

At last, confused and weakened by the assault of all three punks, the

mutant Ziggy swayed on his feet. Brute delivered a final, shattering blow, and the monster crashed into the ruined street, causing the very buildings to shudder.

The Grils floated down in front of the dizzied Jasper.

"Now, Jade," announced Berserk nastily. "You're finally gettin' what's coming to ya"

"Yeh!" yelled Brute. "You almost got our sister _eaten!_ Now get ready to be pounded!"

Jasper, weakend by all that had happened, could only stare at them mutely.

But suddenly a great blast of energy tore through the air and caught all three of the powerpunks in its embrace. The punks screamed in unison, their eyes forming huge black x's.

Then they collapsed to the pavement.

It was the last Jasper knew before his consciousness fled him.

Sometime later, Jasper regained his senses. Groggily, he sat up. he numbly realized that he was in a bed somewhere. "Uhhhh?" he muttered. His head ached terribly, undoubtedly an affect of his ordeal. Where was this? A hospital?

"Awake at last, boy!" said a voice. It was a voice with a heroic ring to it, a voice the boy knew well. Jasper snapped into alertness, the pain in his head diminishing.

He swung himself over the side of what seemed to be a hospital bed. And he gasped.

Before him stood Jomo Momo, wielding his laser gun. Jasper realized that he had been rescued and taken to the monkey-hero's volcano.

"Jomo!" Jasper cried. "You're the one who saved me!"

"That is correct! I have saved you from those twisted girls by blasting them with a blast of chemical X nullifier, a chemical which nullifies Chemcial X! The Powerpunks are incapacitated-for the moment!"

Suddenly Jasper realized. "Ziggy" he cried. "Where is Ziggy?"

"Oh," said Jomo, "You mean the guinea pig of Oppressor Plutonium's? he is over here." Jasper followed Jomo to a table where he saw Ziggy in his container; the guinea pig had been brought back to normal. Ziggy, reverted to his normal size and condition. He looked up at Jasper and smiled at him. Then he leapt into the boy's arms, and began to lick his face.

"Oh, Ziggy, you're okay!" Jasper cried, petting him fondly. "And you're back to normal! How-how'd you do it, Jomo? How'd you get him back to his normal size?"

"Very easy," Jomo explained. "Just a drop of Restorative Chemical 9, and presto! You're little friend is back to his normal, adorable self!"

"Oh, thank you sir!" Jasper said. "But what about Jelks?"

"Hmm?"

"My helicopter pilot, who was knocked unconscious!"

"The ambulance came and took care of him. That was quick thinking on your part!"

"Is he alright?" Jasper asked.

"He is in fair condition, the last I have heard."

"I will visit him, at once!" Jasper said. He placed Ziggy back in his container, and patted his head.

"You must get some more rest, boy, after what you've just been through. After you have recuperated enough, I'll see that you are returned home."

Jasper realized that he still felt terribly worn by the ordeal he'd just barely survived. He felt like plunging back into the bed and sleeping. "Let my grandmum know, please," he murmured faintly.

"Certainly I will. And I shall make certain that Ziggy remains here, in my own lab from now on!"

"Oh, will you?" Jasper cried in delight.

"Of course! Thanks to you he'll never suffer maltreatment again, for there is no ill treatment to be had here!"

"I want to thank you again, Jomo," said Jasper as he climbed into the bed. "Ziggy and I wouldn't be here is it weren't for Viletown's greatest hero!"

"For Ziggy," said Jomo, "I Jomo Momo am not the true hero! The real hero is a small boy named Jasper Jade!"

"But I was so frightened!" exclaimed Jasper. "I was terrified the entire time!"

"Certainly you were! But you stayed with him didn't you? You did everything you could to make sure Ziggy was safe, and so he is!"

"I did," said Jasper, as he climbed back in the hospital bed, and was soon fast asleep.

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file.